

The role of moderation when using PaCT

The scale scores and reporting that PaCT produces are enhanced (made more dependable) when teachers work together to become familiar with the Learning Progression Frameworks (LPFs) that underpin PaCT and with how to use PaCT to make judgments. As well as supporting the use of PaCT, this practice encourages rich discussions about the curriculum and the nature of progression.

Moderation, in the context of PaCT, should be focused on the processes involved in using PaCT to make judgments. The aim should be to arrive at a shared understanding of how to use the appropriate LPF to make judgments. In general, moderation will not involve groups of teachers formally examining examples of students' work, although teachers might like to discuss how well different tasks produce the kinds of evidence that support different judgments. These kinds of discussions can happen at any time and are an intended use of the LPFs.

Both novices and expert PaCT users need to be involved in moderation. Experts can develop approaches that become internalised and automatic. From time to time these approaches need to be checked and, if necessary, recalibrated. Novices, on the other hand, need opportunities to check their understandings and interpretations as part of becoming proficient PaCT users.

Reasons to moderate

There are several reasons why moderation is important. Four of these are outlined below.

- 1. To create a shared understanding of the LPFs and PaCT**
PaCT presents the reference material for making a series of decisions (the LPFs) and guides the decision process. It is critical that everyone using PaCT understands how it is structured, including the language used to describe different parts of PaCT and the LPFs.
- 2. To create a shared understanding of the progression that underpins each aspect**
Each aspect in the LPF outlines a progression. Teachers need to discuss and agree on what is central to each progression and share understandings of how the sets of illustrations differ from the sets immediately above and below.
- 3. To develop a shared understanding of what to notice and recognise**
The LPFs provide concrete illustrations of what to notice and recognise when working with students. This, however, doesn't guarantee that all teachers will interpret these in the same way. Moderation provides a mechanism for discussing how to interpret the illustrations and for testing ideas.
- 4. To ensure judgments are made in a similar way**
It is essential that teachers share a definition of what making a best-fit judgment entails and can agree on what counts as appropriate and sufficient evidence to support a decision. Moderation provides an opportunity for teachers to explain how they have reached decisions about different students and what evidence they have brought to bear.